

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03
INR-10 NSAE-00 ICA-11 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03
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FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
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INFO USDOC WASHDC

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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: EINV, JM
SUBJECT: STATE/COMMERCE INVESTMENT MISSION TO JAMAICA

REF: KINGSTON 5803

1. STATE/COMMERCE TEAM HEADED BY DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY ARELLANO COMPLETED FIRST DAY OF ITS VISIT TO JAMAICA AIMED AT EXAMINING INVESTMENT CLIMATE. TEAM'S VISIT HAS RECEIVED PROMINENT AND FACTUAL COVERAGE BY LOCAL MEDIA. BASED ON FIRST DAY'S ACTIVITIES, IT APPEARS THAT TEAM'S VISIT WILL PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CANDID AND CONSTRUCTIVE EXCHANGE OF VIEWS WITH GOJ AND PRIVATE SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES ON JAMAICAN INVESTMENT CLIMATE. FOLLOWING ARE HIGHLIGHTS OF FIRST DAY'S ACTIVITIES:

2. TEAM MET WITH AMBASSADOR AND ECDA DIRECTOR LION FOR BRIEFING ON JAMAICAN POLITICAL SITUATION AND HOW IT RELATES TO GOJ ECONOMIC POLICIES AND PERFORMANCE. TEAM AGREED WITH EMBASSY THAT BEST APPROACH WOULD BE TO LISTEN CAREFULLY TO WHAT JAMAICANS HAVE TO SAY ABOUT INVESTMENT CLIMATE, BUT TO POSTPONE WRITING REPORT (WHICH MIGHT POSSIBLY BE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SUBMITTED TO GOJ) UNTIL AFTER RETURNING TO WASHINGTON. THIS WOULD ALLOW SUITABLE COORDINATION WITH EMBASSY AND OTHER AGENCIES.

2. INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE MINISTER DANNY WILLIAMS HOSTED MORNING MEETING THAT INCLUDED WIDE SPECTRUM OF GOJ OFFICIALS CONCERNED WITH INVESTMENT POLICY. MINISTER WILLIAMS PROVIDED

FRANK AND SURPRISINGLY CANDID SUMMARY OF CURRENT ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES, AND OUTLINED AREAS IN WHICH GOJ SAW FOREIGN INVESTMENT PLAYING ROLE IN FURTHERING NATIONAL OBJECTIVES. IN GIVE AND TAKE THAT FOLLOWED, GOJ OFFICIALS WERE STRAIGHT-FORWARD IN EXPLAINING PROBLEMS IN ATTRACTING FOREIGN INVESTMENT AND POINTED TO WAYS IN WHICH USG COULD BE HELPFUL IN THIS AREA. FOR ITS PART, TEAM DESCRIBED LIMITATIONS OPERATING ON US ABILITY TO ASSIST, BUT PROMISED TO LISTEN ATTENTIVELY DURING ITS VISIT AND WHERE APPROPRIATE, TO RAISE PROBLEMS IN WASHINGTON FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION. TEAM STRESSED THAT INVESTMENT DECISIONS ARE MADE BY US PRIVATE SECTOR AND THAT CONDITIONING ELEMENT WAS PERCEPTION OF INVESTMENT CLIMATE. MEETING ENDED ON FRIENDLY AND OPTIMISTIC NOTE.

4. LUNCHEON HOSTED BY FINANCE MINISTER ERIC BELL INCLUDED BOTH GOJ OFFICIALS AND KEY PRIVATE SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES. AGAIN, CONVERSATION WAS RELAXED, FRIENDLY AND CANDID. MINISTER BELL, IN CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR IRVING AND ARELLANO, SUGGESTED POSSIBILITY OF JOINT VENTURES IN AGRIBUSINESS SECTOR AND OTHERS AMONG FOREIGN PRIVATE INVESTORS, JAMAICAN PRIVATE SECTOR, AND QUOTE SMALL PART UNQUOTE BY GOJ. THIS WOULD ALLOW GOJ TO PLAY FACILITATIVE ROLE AND MORE SPECIFICALLY THAT OF ARBITRATOR OR PROTECTOR. (COMMENT: THIS MAY BE MOVE AWAY FROM TRADITIONAL GOJ INSISTENCE OF 50 PERCENT LOCAL OWNERSHIP.) LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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5. AFTERNOON WAS SPENT TOURING KINGSTON PORT FACILITIES, INCLUDING NEW FREE ZONE DESIGNED TO ATTRACT FOREIGN-OWNED MANUFACTURING, WAREHOUSING, AND TRANSSHIPPING OPERATIONS. OF PARTICULAR INTEREST WAS GOJ REPORT THAT FIVE SOUTH KOREAN FACTORIES ARE TO BE ESTABLISHED IN FREE ZONE BY END OF 1978. IF PLANTS ARE SUCCESSFUL, UP TO 20 MORE MAY FOLLOW. PRODUCTION IS PLANNED TO BE EXPORTED TO US, LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN MARKETS.

6. SAME EVENING MINISTER WILLIAMS HOSTED INFORMAL RECEPTION IN TEAM'S HONOR.

7. COURTESY CALL ON PRIME MINISTER MANLEY HAS BEEN SHIFTED TO THURSDAY MORNING. IRVING

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Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition History: n/a
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Disposition Remarks:
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